

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6177

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Commerce & Labor, January 20, 2016

Title: An act relating to the marijuana research license.

Brief Description: Modifying marijuana research license provisions.

Sponsors: Senator Rivers.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Commerce & Labor: 1/18/16, 1/20/16 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6177 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Baumgartner, Chair; Braun, Vice Chair; Hasegawa, Ranking Minority Member; Conway, Keiser and Warnick.

Staff: Richard Rodger (786-7461)

Background: In 2015, a marijuana research license was authorized to permit a licensee to produce and possess marijuana to test chemical potency and composition levels; conduct clinical investigations of marijuana-derived drug products; conduct research on the efficacy and safety of administering marijuana as part of a medical treatment; and conduct genomic or agricultural research.

Marijuana research license applicants must submit a description of the research the applicant intends to conduct to the Life Sciences Discovery Fund (LSDF). LSDF must review the project and determine if it meets one of the permitted research purposes. The application is rejected if LSDF does not find that the project is for a permitted research purpose. Fifty percent of the application fee and renewal fees must be deposited to the LSDF.

LSDF was established in 2005 to support the state's life sciences sector and conduct related research. In 2015, the Legislature transferred \$62 million from the LSDF's budget to the state general fund and prohibited the fund from making any grants after July 1, 2015.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Summary of Bill (Recommended Substitute): The Liquor and Cannabis Board (LCB), instead of LSDF, is assigned the lead role of reviewing projects submitted by marijuana research license applicants. The LCB must select a scientific reviewer to review the projects. Additional project assessment criteria is provided for the reviewer to consider. The research project applicant must pay the reviewer directly for the entire cost of the scientific review.

A new exemption is added to the Public Records Act that protects proprietary financial, commercial, operations, and technical and research information and data submitted to or obtained by the LCB in applications for marijuana research licenses, or in reports submitted by the licensees.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY COMMERCE & LABOR COMMITTEE (Recommended Substitute): Adds additional criteria for the scientific reviewer to consider when evaluating marijuana research projects and clarifies the “scientific reviewer” definition.

Removes the provision requiring 50% of the application, issuance, and renewals fees to be paid to the scientific reviewer. Requires the applicant to pay the reviewer directly for the entire cost of the review.

Adds an exemption to the Public Records Act that protects proprietary information submitted to the LCB by marijuana research licensees.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Only research can answer questions like the medical utility of cannabis, whether agricultural pesticides are appropriate, and whether pathogens found in products create safety concerns. The state needs a regulated license system like the State of Oregon has developed. Scientifically valid marijuana research is needed so everyone, including medical providers, can be better informed about medical cannabis therapy, drug interactions, and appropriate dosing guidelines. The proprietary records, data, and reports from the marijuana research should be protected from public disclosure.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Jessica Tonani, Verda Bio CEO; Ryan Day; Ezra Eickmeyer; Jarrod Olson, Battelle Memorial Institute, Research Scientist; James Paribello, WSLCB; Megan Holt.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.